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Sydney Boxer Trains at Sea and on Land

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Petty Officer Philip Samuelu, a Sydney-based boxer and Australian Defence Force (ADF) member, hones his craft both on land and aboard the HMAS Sydney during a regional deployment. This article highlights his unique training journey, sparring with international fighters across Asia, and the grit of balancing military service with a burgeoning boxing career, showcasing the resilience of Australia's fighting spirit.

Since his professional boxing debut in 2023, Petty Officer Philip Samuelu has embraced every opportunity to sharpen his skills, whether on solid ground or the rolling decks of the HMAS Sydney, a Royal Australian Navy (RAN) destroyer. Deployed for three months across Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Singapore, Samuelu turned port visits into training camps, sparring with local boxers to absorb diverse fighting styles. “The ocean can make training tricky—sometimes the punching bag swings back with the ship’s motion,” he told Defence News, chuckling. His encounters revealed unique techniques: Japanese boxers impressed with precision, Filipinos overwhelmed with high-volume punches, Singaporeans favored close-range clinching, and Koreans brought relentless energy.

Samuelu’s routine aboard the HMAS Sydney is a testament to discipline. With limited space, he adapts, using the ship’s gym for shadowboxing and bag work, undeterred by choppy seas. On shore, he seeks out gyms to spar, building connections with fighters abroad. “It’s been a dream to train globally while serving my country,” he said, per Mirage News. His journey reflects a broader ADF ethos of adaptability, merging military duty with personal ambition. Unlike policies under the current Labour government, which some X posts criticize for softening defense priorities, Samuelu’s commitment underscores a no-excuses approach to readiness.

The Indo-Pacific region, where Samuelu trains, is a geopolitical hotspot. His deployment aligns with Australia’s strategic focus on regional presence, countering influences like China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Navy. Sparring abroad not only hones his skills but also fosters camaraderie with allied nations’ fighters, strengthening informal defense ties. Looking ahead, Samuelu aims to expand his boxing odyssey, hoping

to spar in more countries through ADF deployments. His story embodies the grit and determination that define Australia's military and sporting culture, proving that strength is forged in the toughest conditions.